



A Salmonella Outbreak Reported in the Eastern US

As of July 30, 2004 approximately 300 cases of Salmonellosis from two different strains (*Salmonella javiana* [type E-1] and *Salmonella anatum* [type D-1]) have been reported. The salmonella bacteria generally cause diarrhea, fever, and cramps for up to three days. Of the several hundred Salmonellosis cases reported, Pennsylvania contains the majority while incidents have also been reported in Ohio, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia. The FDA, CDC, and several state health and agricultural agencies suspect pre-sliced Roma tomatoes as the source of this Salmonella outbreak. The tomatoes in question were ingested after eating deli sandwiches sold at an area chain convenience store within the proximal areas of infection. Since discovery of this outbreak, hundreds of tomato and



Courtesy of Heidi Gritzner

lettuce samples have been collected from this chain of stores and tested for evidence of Salmonella. One unopened bag of tomatoes found at a store in

Pennsylvania was confirmed to be positive for *S.anatum*. However, no samples as of yet have been confirmed for the presence of *S.javiana*. In response to the inability to find the source of the *S.javiana* a spokesman for the Pennsylvania Department of Health has commented that it is not uncommon to find that all the evidence is gone simply because it was all used up. At present, this occurrence of multi-serotype *Salmonella* is considered an isolated incident, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health insists that there is no evidence that this outbreak is ongoing.

Avian Influenza Resurfaces in Asia

After months of silence, the Avian Influenza is once again being reported in China, Indonesia, Thailand, and Viet Nam. This poses a major threat to public health since many of these outbreaks do not seem to have any epidemiological links to each other. It is feared that this new batch of outbreaks may result in the direct spread of infection from poultry to humans, as it did earlier this year. There is a possibility that the H5N1 virus will

recombine with the human influenza virus, causing the emergence of a new mutated strain that can be easily transmitted between humans. Officials at WHO are advising anyone involved in the culling process to be vaccinated with the current influenza vaccine to prevent co-infection, which could produce a possible global pandemic. Updated information can be found on <http://www.who.int>.

Second death linked to West Nile Virus in California

Almost 300 people in the United States have fallen ill to the West Nile virus this year, according to the CDC. The recent death of a California man has brought the number of deaths up to seven in 2004. Because West Nile fever is not on the list of nationally notifiable diseases, the actual number of affected

individuals may be much higher. More severe neuroinvasive forms, such as West Nile meningitis and West Nile encephalitis, are usually the cause of West Nile deaths. Daily updates on this disease can be found on <http://www.cdc.gov/>.